

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 243288

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-10 AID-05 EB-06 IO-10 RSC-01

COME-00 TRSE-00 SWF-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 /091 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W:RMWALTER:JW

APPROVER BY AF/W:JLLOUGHRAN

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R 051702Z NOV 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

UNCLAS STATE 243288

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CD, EAID

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES REPORT

1. HERE IS COMPLETE TEXT OF LESLIE GELB ARTICLE ON CHAD WHICH APPEARED IN NOV. 1, NEW YORK TIMES. BEGIN TEXT: WASHINGTON, OCT.31--THE GOVERNMENT OF CHAD HAS BANNED FURTHER AMERICAN FOOD RELIEF EFFORTS IN REACTION TO A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE INDICATING THAT THERE HAD BEEN CORRUPTION AND INEFFICIENCY IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE AID BY PERSONS CLOSE TO THE CHADIAN LEADERSHIP. CHAD'S ACTION WAS CONFIRMED TODAY BY UNITED STATES STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS.

THE DECISION, ACCORDING TO THESE OFFICIALS, LEAVES ABOUT 5,000 METRIC TONS OF GRAIN SITTING ACROSS THE BORDER IN NIGERIA AND ANOTHER 5,000 METRIC TONS IN THE PIPELINE FROM THE UNITED STATES.

THE TIMES ARTICLE, WHICH APPEARED ON OCT.10, STATED THAT THE PRINCIPAL REASONS CITED FOR THE MISMANAGEMENT OF THE RELIEF PROGRAM "ARE INCOMPETENCE, APATHY AND PARTICIPATION IN OR TOLERATION OF PROFITEERING ON THE PART OF PERSONS UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 243288

CLOSE TO THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP."

PRESIDENT NGARTA TOMBALBAYE OF CHAD, THE OFFICIALS SAID, INTERPRETED THIS AS A CHARGE THAT HIS WIFE WAS ENGAGED IN PROFITEERING.

A STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL REPORTED A NEWS CONFERENCE ON OCT.26, PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE SAID THIS COULD NOT BE TRUE SINCE HIS WIFE WAS "AN ILLITERATE, WHICH IS THE WAY I WISH IT--IT'S BETTER."

AN ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL EXPLAINED MR. TOMBALBAYE'S ACTION BY SAYING, "HE FEELS INSULTED, AND IF TAKING FOOD MEANS TAKING INSULTS, HE'D RATHER DO WITHOUT THE FOOD."

AMERICAN OFFICIALS STILL HOPE TO CONTINUE THE RELIEF PROGRAM IN CHAD AND ARE AWAITING A CLARIFICATION OF MR. TOMBALBAYE'S DESIRES.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CHADIAN GOVERNMENT HAD ANNOUNCED THE BAN ON FURTHER AMERICAN FOOD RELIEF BEFORE NOTIFYING THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY.

BEFORE THE BAN, THE UNITED STATES HAD BEEN AIRLIFTING TONS OF GRAIN ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS FOR THE CHADIANS CAUGHT IN THE PROLONGED AND WIDESPREAD SUB-SAHARAN DROUGHT. ONCE THE BAN WAS ANNOUNCED, THE AIRLIFT, WHICH STILL HAD ABOUT HALF OF ITS 4,000 TONS TO GO, WAS IMMEDIATELY ENDED. THREE C-103'S AND ABOUT 40 UNITED STATES AIR FORCE PERSONNEL WERE IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAWN FROM CHAD, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIALS. ND TEXT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CORRUPTION, WHEAT, ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT, FOOD ASSISTANCE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE243288
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RMWALTER:JW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740318-0314
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741169/aaaacgou.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 NOV 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 NOV 2002 by smithrj>; APPROVED <27 NOV 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES REPORT
TAGS: EAID, CD, NEW YORK TIMES
To: NDJAMENA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005